Sl. No.	Name of Plant/Unit	Year of commis-sioning	Product	Capacity Addition ('000 MT)
9	Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd.: Thal Phase-II Retrofit	1999-2000	Urea	(+) 110.0 (Addition)

Progress of Assam Gas Cracker Project

897. DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Assam Gas Cracker Project has made no progress since 1996;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps are envisaged to accelerate the pace of implementation of this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (c) M/s. Reliance Assam Petrochemicals Ltd. (RAPL), a joint venture of the Assam Industrial Development Corporation (AIDC) and Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL), holds a LOI for setting up a Gas Cracker Project in Assam. M/s. RAPL have taken initial steps such as Environmental Impact Assessment study, discussions with process licensors and technology supplier etc. Government of Assam and M/s. RAPL are in the process of finalising the site for location of the project. Feedstock Supply Agreement between Oil India Ltd. (OIL) and RAPL has been concluded in all respects except for issues relating to Liquidated Damages (LD).

On finalisation of the Feedstock Supply Agreement(s) and

acquisition of land, the project authorities expect the project to be commissioned in 44 months.

Assets of SSPL and Bengal Immunity

898. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether productive assets of Messrs SSPL and Bengal Immunity are remaining unutilised for want of working capital, in spite of market demand for anti-malaria drugs, etc.; and

(b) if so, the time-bound steps taken by Government so far to maintain 'holding-on operation' till final decision at BIFR?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) and (b) Pending the decision regarding the future of these companies by the Board for Industrial & Financial Reconstruction (BIFR), Government has been releasing non-plan funds from time to time to enable payment of wages and salaries to the employees/ workers of these companies.

Consumption of urea

899. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the rate of increase in consumption of urea in India and in West Bengal for the last three years;

(b) the actual consumption of urea in West Bengal for the last three years;

(c) the production capacity and actual production of urea in the State for the last three years; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to increase production of urea within the State *vis-a-vis* consumption?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF